

OUR RELIGIOUS COLUMN.

NOT OF SECTS, BUT OF HEARTS.

By the Rev. William G. Osborne. What the age demands is, a "union" of kindred Christian hearts in one grand rally against bigotry, superstition, and intolerance, which have too long held "high carnival" in our world, most effectually blocking the wheels of Christian progress, and casting a death-pall over the bodies and souls of men. Reason and common prudence argue against denominational unity; for such a unity would sound the death-knell of vital piety as certainly as the great Romish Church stands forth to-day the mere embodiment of ritualistic forms and ceremonies, both in Europe and America. The success of experimental and practical godliness does not depend upon the strict adherence of any party to peculiar conventionalities, but to a charity which binds men's hearts rather than their creeds, and gives them a zeal overlapping the non-essentials of Christianity, and in sympathy and effort constituting them one. The Church, so much hated by Satan and the world, has her multiform regiments and corps; all acting under Christ, the Captain of our salvation! And we can see no good reason why these various ecclesiastical divisions should not work with the same zeal and unity for the attainment of a spiritual good that distinguished the loyal armies of the republic when, under the talismanic influence of a Grant, they marshalled themselves in united legions to sweep rebellion from the face of our country. It is even doubted whether the millennial morning will witness that denominational union, so much harped on by a few religious fanatics of the present day; for while such an affluence of the Holy Spirit may, and doubtless will, create a union of hearts, it will not be likely to create a total disregard of those various church agencies through whose instrumentality the world will have been saved. What the age now demands is, the recognition of every man as Christ's whose immortal nature bears His image and superscription, without any particular reference to creeds or party differences; love and obedience being the only tests of true and unfeigned loyalty. Any sectarian standards calculated to keep Christian hearts apart should be frowned down by an enlightened people as giving no satisfactory evidence of divine appointment.

SUMMARY OF CHURCH NEWS.

EPISCOPAL.—The General Theological Seminary of New York city finds difficulty in filling its vacant professorships. The trouble is a lack of funds. To gain the latter, it is proposed to sell the grounds and move elsewhere. There are about seventy-five students. —The Protestant Episcopal Church Missionary Society for Seamen in the city and port of New York have just completed a new floating chapel at the foot of Pike street, East river. It is a plain Gothic structure, arched within, neat in its appointments, and capable of accommodating about 350 persons. The cost of it was about \$25,000. On Sunday, the 9th inst., it was opened for public worship. —Dr. Temple has been enthroned amid much enthusiasm as Bishop of Exeter. His sermon was in effect an answer to those who charged him with heresy. In it he fairly owned his acceptance of the Bible as containing a revelation from God, of supreme authority so far as religious questions are concerned. But he regards it as a question open to discussion how far it is to be regarded as an infallible authority on questions of science or history that are quite indifferent in their religious bearings. —Bishop Smith, of Kentucky, the presiding Episcopal Bishop in this country, writes to the Hartford Churchman in defense of the provincial system, which the increasing number of Episcopal dioceses seems to require. He suggests seven provinces, of which the Eastern should include eleven dioceses—those of New England and New York. He suggests that these provinces should appoint the members of the national federate council, which should have the last law-making power and should meet once in ten years, and should then send its representatives to a patriarchal council, to meet also decennially at Lambeth. —At a late Evangelical Episcopal Conference meeting held in New York, it was unanimously voted, on motion of Dr. Vinton, "that the Evangelical bishops be requested to prepare alternate forms in the disputed offices of the Prayer Book, and present them to and demand a grant of them at the next General Convention." A further resolution advising a full and thorough revision of the whole Prayer Book, was passed by a vote of 76 to 46. Yet another requested the Evangelical bishops to strive for a repeal of the canon forbidding ministers not episcopally ordained to officiate. A resolution was passed requesting the Evangelical bishops to inquire whether there were reason to institute proceedings on the charge of false doctrines against any of the bishops. METHODIST.—Rev. Mr. Sawyer, a Methodist preacher at Maryland Ridge, Me., dropped dead on the 6th inst., while crossing a field. He had suffered from heart disease. —Dr. George C. M. Roberts, LL. D., a well-known physician and minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, died in Baltimore on Saturday last, aged sixty-four years. —The Winchester district, the Rev. W. T. D. Clemm, presiding elder, has enjoyed a glorious year. One thousand persons have professed conversion, and the work has been general, while in some points especial interest has been felt and manifested. This district is in Virginia. —Rev. Henry Boehm, now in his ninety-fifth year, recently visited Dr. Woodruff's church in New York, and assisted in the administration of the Lord's Supper. When the pastor introduced him as the oldest Methodist minister in the world, the Sunday School, occupying the galleries, arose and sang a beautiful hymn of welcome. The scene was deeply affecting. —Bishop Marvin, Southern Methodist, of Missouri, introduces to the public a new book, entitled "Martyrdom in Missouri." It brings before the public the alleged facts in reference to the robbery by the Northern Methodists during the war of churches and property belonging to the Southern Methodists, and gives details to show that ministers of the Gospel were mobbed, imprisoned, and put to death for preaching without taking the test oath. —The Methodist papers are still discussing the irregularities in their Book Concern. A

summary of the report of a sub-committee is given by the Methodist, from which we learn that there was great laxness in conducting the business of the bindery, there being no system of checks by which it could be told whether bills presented actually represented goods received, and since December 1st, 1867, there were \$20,000 worth of skins not accounted for. The paper manufacturers say they would have provided paper for from one to three cents a pound cheaper than it was purchased through Mr. Porter, the favored agent. PRESBYTERIAN.—The lack of ordained men has led the Presbyterians of South Alabama, in accordance with permission given by the last Southern General Assembly, to appoint fifteen lay evangelists. Five accepted the duties. —The new Presbyterian paper of Chicago is expected to appear the first of February, as nearly \$50,000 have been secured as a financial basis. Rev. Arthur Swazey has resigned his pastorate in Chicago to become its editor. —Nine churches of this denomination were organized last year, viz.:—At Brookfield, Conn.; at Guttenburg, N. J.; at West End, N. J.; at Clymer, N. Y.; at Danforth, Ill.; and three in Virginia. —A generous benefactor, whose name is not published, has recently given the sum of \$25,000 to the fund for disabled ministers and their families of the Presbyterian Church. The fund now amounts to \$35,000. —The Presbyterians of Kansas propose as a memorial of reunion to take up Highland University, which ranks as a good academy, and to make a respectable college of it. They propose to endow it immediately with \$50,000. —A first-class educational institution, under Presbyterian control, is about to be established at or near Pittsburg, to be called the "Pennsylvania Female College." A charter has been obtained, a Board of Trustees organized, and a subscription of \$30,000 secured. —It is reported that Rev. T. De Witt Talmage received into the Central Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn, on the 9th inst., forty-three new members, making, in all, one hundred and thirty-seven additions during the few months of his pastorate—many of them remarkable cases of conversion. —The Old School Presbyterian boards are appealing lustily for contributions, complaining that the zeal of reunion has not helped them. During the first ten months of the fiscal year the Board of Domestic Missions has received \$28,435 less than during the same month last year, though the appropriations for the year are \$23,084 more than then. The board has felt obliged to decline to make any further appointments. BAPTIST.—The Rev. E. J. Stevens, a former Methodist minister of Belchertown, Massachusetts, is about to join the Baptist denomination. —Mrs. J. Lawrence Smith, daughter of the late Hon. James Guthrie, as soon as the charter of the Baptist Orphan Home, Louisville, Ky., is obtained, will convey to the managers a lot in that city worth \$15,000 and \$5000 toward the necessary building. —During the past year the Falls of Schuylkill Church have raised about \$6000, half of which was expended in improving their meeting-house. This is nearly three times as much as the church ever raised before in one year. —The Central Baptist of St. Louis, Mo., protests against the organization of more Baptist churches in Missouri. There are in that State 800 churches, with 60,000 members—an average, if all were discoverable, of 75 each. Half of them have less than forty. Not one church in twenty is supporting a pastor, and many are doing absolutely nothing outside of themselves. That paper says that "if the 60,000 Baptists aforesaid were consolidated into 200 churches of 300 members each, it would be easy to raise \$50,000 annually for State evangelization." —A writer in the Examiner neatly parries the charge of narrowness made against those Baptists who dreaded that a proposition would be made for a union sacramental season at the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York, by confessing his willingness to have the matter proposed, if there shall also be a broad-minded interchange of pulpits. He says: "I am passionately fond of Christian union and brotherly love, and I do so much long to hear Spurgeon in Trinity, Pusey at St. Albans, and the Archbishop of Canterbury in Dr. Kendrick's meeting-house." CONGREGATIONAL.—Sixty years ago there was but one Congregational church in Missouri. There are now fifty-six. —Fourteen Congregational churches have been organized among the colored people in and about New Orleans during the last year. —On the 29th ultimo Rev. David Brigham celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his installation over the church at Randolph, Mass. —The suggestion of the Congregationalist that next year, the 250th of Congregationalism, be celebrated as a jubilee year, meets a warm response from all quarters. —A Southern association of the Congregational churches of California was reorganized at San Buenaventura on December 7. It embraces four churches and six ministers. —The Rev. Mr. Merriman, pastor of the Broadway Congregational Church in Norwich, Conn., has decided to decline the call to the chair of Church History in the Chicago Theological Seminary. —Sixteen Congregational clergymen have been ordained and installed in New Hampshire during the past year. Three have been dismissed, and four died. There are one hundred and ninety-one churches of the denomination in the State, and about nineteen thousand members. —Bangor Theological Seminary is soon to meet with another loss. Last year Dr. Shepherd was carried to his "upper home," and now Dr. Pond so feels the weight of years that he has explicitly informed the trustees that he will cease his labors as Professor at the close of the current year. LUTHERAN.—A correspondent of the Lutheran Observer says:—"The Lutheran Church numbers already 400,000 members, more than 2000 ministers, over 3000 congregations, and some of the latter the largest in this country. In point of members we now rank third among the Protestant churches in the United States." CATHOLIC.—The Pope has published a bull regulating the penalties of excommunication. It was prepared with the utmost secrecy, and not seen by the members of the Council before its publication. Among those subject to the major excommunication, ipso facto, and to whom absolution can be given only by him, except in articulo mortis, are all heretics, all who read books condemned by the Holy See, all who "directly or indirectly" compel lay judges to bring ecclesiastics before their tribunals. He fulminates against the radical principles of civilization, and assails above all others the principle of toleration. He declares excommunicate those who give burial

to heretics, those who offend or intimidate the inquisitors, denouncers, witnesses, and other ministers of the Holy Office, and hosts of others. The bull has fallen like a thunderbolt on the assembled prelates, most of whom find that by its sentences it, ipso facto, excommunicates the governments of the countries to which they belong. —The advocates of Papal infallibility have circulated a petition among the bishops of the council in favor of that dogma. Over three hundred fathers have refused to sign it, and the opposers of the project intend to get up a counter petition. But the London Tablet (Catholic) says the majority in favor of the plan will be enormous. A commission of the council has been appointed for the purpose of receiving, and, if thought best, presenting to the council any proposition that shall be made by its members. This is a very important commission; and the fact that it is composed of such men as Antonelli, Manning, and Deshayes is regarded as most favorable to the project. It is expected that nothing will be presented against the Pope's wishes, especially as he has the power to veto any proposition which they might wish, if less subservient to the Pope's infallibility, to present. THE JEWS.—The Universal Israelitish Alliance is preparing to send a large number of poor Russian Jews to this country. The American Jews protest against the plan as most unwise. A German paper, the Israelit, says Polish Jews have no wish to emigrate, as they fear their children will lose their religion, since "in America there is no Arab (that is, no cities which are enclosed by wires, and by that constituted a city in the Jewish legal sense); no *Moyseh* (an establishment for taking the ritual bath); no *Beth haamidrah* (an institution where they receive regular instruction in the Talmud, and where men spend all day in studying it); no *Shechithah* (no regular supervision of those who are appointed to kill animals according to the ritual code); no regular observance of the Sabbath and holidays." MISSIONARY NEWS.—Intelligence from Rotterdam, one of the Fiji Islands, represents two chiefs of importance as having just become worshippers with the Wesleyan converts. Popery, with two priests, was not strong, nor gaining ground. —Dr. Maclay, Superintendent of the Methodist Missions in Fuh Chau, China, says that the past year has been one of great prosperity. He thinks over 200 souls have been converted, and the prospect for the future is very cheering. —The Presbyterian Mission has a female normal school in Mysore, Northern India. It has just sent out its first male teachers. At first the girls refused to teach, as it was considered bad enough for a woman to learn to read, not to speak of teaching. But the lady principal instantly expelled the recusant parties, and that brought them to terms. —The progress of opinion in Portugal in reference to religious freedom is very marked in decisions of courts and articles of the press. An employe of the government was tried at Fayal for teaching Protestant doctrines. The inferior court acquitted him. An appeal was taken to the superior court; and again the decision is in his favor. Mr. Cassels also has been acquitted at Oporto, and has resumed teaching the Portuguese. A native of Madeira—the Rev. Manuel Pires, from America—an ordained minister of the Old School Presbyterians, has just begun preaching to his countrymen. —During October a Chilian Reformed Church was organized in Valparaiso. Five native Christians confessed the Lord Jesus Christ in a congregation of 80 to 100 persons, most of them natives. At a public meeting lately held in Santiago for the purpose of raising funds for a new Roman Catholic seminary, the United States Minister, General Kilpatrick, was present, and in his address said:—"There was a time in the world's history when ignorance and superstition went hand in hand, when education existed only among the clergy and a certain aristocracy, and when the masses knew of the Bible merely what others taught them sparingly. Happily, those times of ignorance have gone by; this work, gentlemen, I am with you. With the open Bible, with universal education and suffrage, I can exclaim, with all my heart, Forward, Chilian! Advance in the path of glory!" This sentiment was received with prolonged manifestations of applause. Two colporteurs are employed in selling Bibles and tracts in Chili. —The Independent has received quite full accounts of the destruction of the royal idols of Madagascar. These were the property of the royal family and of the Government. The idols of the chiefs and of the villages were not disturbed; although the Queen answered to those who asked if she meant to require the destruction of other idols, that nothing could give her greater pleasure, but that she did not command it. Orders were given some time ago for their destruction, but the keepers refused to obey, and intimated that the idol possessed a power to poison its enemies. When they came to the capital to assert their rights as nobles, she took advantage of the opportunity to send a force of soldiers, who, on arriving at the place, read the proclamation and proceeded to execute their orders. After burning the appendages and robes of the idol, they proceeded to burn the idol itself, when the people said:—"You cannot burn him; he is a god!" To which the Christian officer replied:—"If he be a god, he will not burn; we are going to try." And when enveloped in flames one of them held it up on a stick to show it was burning. This removes one great obstacle to the spread of Christianity. One effect was the immediate increase of the village congregations. During that year of severe persecution, suffering for at least 200 died and thousands survived for their faith, the numbers of the Christians during that period had increased from less than 100 to 7000. At the close of 1868, seven years later, the adherents to Christianity exceeded 40,000; while in some parts of the province their number has doubled during the past year. The position of Madagascar leads us to hope that its conversion and civilization will make it to the regions of Africa which Dr. Livingstone has been opening up what England is to Europe. CURTAINS AND SHADES. W. H. CARRYL Has resumed the Curtain Business with his Sons at No. 723 CHESTNUT STREET, Two doors above his Old Stand. CURTAIN DECORATIONS of the newest fabric ELEGANT GILT and ROSEWOOD CORNICES, CASELS, FRINGS, WINDOW SHADES, LACE CURTAINS, from the plainest to the most elaborate and expensive. RAILROAD SUPPLIES. W. H. CARRYL & SONS No. 723 CHESTNUT STREET, 11 26 31 Two doors above our Old Stand. EMPIRE SLATE MANTEL WORKS.—J. B. KINGS, No. 108 BROADWAY Street, 11 26 31

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